

ATLANTA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PILOT GRANT WORKPLAN, 2000-2001

1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE: The purpose of the City of Atlanta's Brownfields Assessment Pilot Workplan is to establish a Brownfields Resource and Information Center (BRIC) in City government to address brownfield environmental issues that impede residential, commercial, and industrial redevelopment efforts in City neighborhoods. Specifically, the BRIC will be designed to address sustainability, livability, and economic development and job creation that will be connected to developing a comprehensive brownfields plan for the City. Activities of the BRIC will also include providing comprehensive community outreach and information activities to educate citizens and the development community of the importance of developing a city-wide comprehensive plan that can be used in the City's residential and commercial revitalization efforts.

2. BACKGROUND

The City of Atlanta is proposing to (1) to continue its research activities of potential brownfield sites in the City's designated Empowerment Zone and (2) to expand its current research activities and data base to other neighborhoods throughout the City to develop a more comprehensive strategy to promote sustainability, livability, economic development and job creation. The City has continued to experience rapid growth in the residential and commercial sectors of its economy. Concurrently, the City's population, since 1996, has continued to grow due to in-migration of suburbanites moving back to the City and due to an increasingly large in-migration of new ethnic groups that are relocating to the City. As the growth has continued, the need for new development sites for new residential and commercial development inside the City has grown. As land prices have increased dramatically for new residential and commercial construction, communities and developers are beginning to look to brownfields as a viable alternative for new development. Current examples of brownfield sites being used for new development in the City are the Atlantic Steel development and the North Yards development (see Exhibit A). The North Yards site is being converted into a business park, which will provide approximately 1000 jobs for residents that live in adjacent neighborhoods and other city residents. The Atlantic Steel project is a much larger development that will develop a mixed-use community in which residents can live and work in the same neighborhood. These two projects are examples that can be replicated in other parts of the City if the City is able to develop a comprehensive brownfields plan.

The goal of this plan will be to enhance the sustainability, livability, and increased economic development activities for the City's residents and development community. The City has recently completed redevelopment plans for several communities within the Empowerment Zone. Through previous brownfields site identification work in these Empowerment Zone communities, the City has identified four project sites where either Phase I or Phase II assessments can be accomplished. With this grant the City is proposing to expand its database of sites throughout the City to identify brownfield "showcase" sites (project sites that are replicable in other city neighborhoods) and to identify sites that can be used as green space for active or passive recreational purposes.

A major activity of the BRIC will be to provide community outreach activities for local communities and Community Development Corporations. The purpose of these outreach efforts will be to educate communities on the connection between environment and sustainability and on how these two factors relate to brownfields. The City will collaborate these efforts with the Environmental Justice Resource Center of Clark Atlanta University. Additionally, the City will collaborate with the Atlanta Development Authority, the City's economic development agency, to provide community outreach activities to the City's business and private development community.

The City realizes that specific policy changes related to tax incentives for development of brownfield sites would enhance the City's brownfield development efforts. As a non-funded EPA activity, the City will conduct research on ways to incorporate proposed changes into the City's Urban Enterprise Zone Program and new research for new incentive legislation will be examined for presentation to the appropriate City legislative committee. Brownfield liability insurance issues will be researched with regards to their implications for City Brownfield development activities.

The brownfields data provided by this project will enable the City to produce a strategic plan that shows how environmental sources can be combined with other City resources to aggressively pursue a more comprehensive brownfield development strategy. These other funds include HUD CDBG community development funds, Empowerment Zone funds, Federal Transportation Enhancement funds, and City Impact Fee funds. The completion of this strategy is important because (1) it can then become part of the City's official strategy when it is incorporated into the City's annual Comprehensive Development Plan and (2) it enhances the City's opportunities to promote sustainability, livability, economic development, and job creation.

3. LOCATION

A map showing the boundaries of the communities where the City's brownfield activities will be concentrated is included as part of Exhibit A. These locations are (1) the Peoplestown community where Phase I and II activities are proposed, (2) a location at 764 Metropolitan Parkway (former site of a trucking company) which is located in southwest Atlanta, (3) the Reynoldstown community which is located in east Atlanta, (4) the Southside Redevelopment Plan area which is located in southeast Atlanta, (5) the Northwest Redevelopment area which is located in northwest Atlanta, and (6) a site at 180 Harriet Street, S.E. which is the home of a former major trucking company. The GIS

database research, which is included as part of this project will allow the City to document potential brownfield sites in these redevelopment areas and in other communities throughout the City.

4. PROJECT APPROACH

As a result of this proposal, the City of Atlanta will be able to better develop sustainable and livable project objectives for communities throughout the City. These program objectives include expansion of the City's current database of brownfield sites that will be used to identify brownfield sites for new residential and commercial uses. The City will complete a minimum of four Phase I assessment and one Phase II assessment projects that lead to new development opportunity for local neighborhoods. The City will also develop some "showcase" sites (conceptualization site plans) that can be replicated by other communities or business developers throughout the City. The City will expand its community outreach and information efforts to local communities, city neighborhood planning units, Community Development Corporations and private development groups. The City will research its Urban Enterprise Zone Program to determine if the selection criteria for this program can be changed to enhance the viability of City tax incentives for new development at brownfield sites. Brownfield liability insurance issues will be researched in regards to their potential impact on utilization of brownfield sites for new development in the City.

The City is currently working with two national organizations, the Argonne National Laboratory and the Center for Land Renewal to develop their a brownfields triage model to assist local communities in prioritizing brownfields sites for new development. These two organizations will join with the City on this project so that their collective expertise can be applied to the different proposed objectives of this project.

5. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

5.1 To create a Brownfields Resource Information Center (BRIC) for expansion of the City's Brownfields effort.

The BRIC will house all City activities sponsored by this grant. The BRIC will be housed as part of the City's Bureau of Planning so that sponsored activities of this project can be integrated into other City planning activities. The City will purchase the necessary equipment and software for the Center and a temporary staff person will be assigned to this project on a part-time basis and will report to the Assistant Director of Redevelopment Planning. One Senior Planner in the Bureau will work with this part time staff person to insure that work and inquiries proceed each working day and that resources of the Center is available to the public. The resources of the BRIC will be available to city residents and developers who want to inquire about brownfield sites for redevelopment purposes and the BRIC will have educational brownfield information on the different topics and issues concerning brownfields. All City project efforts will emanate from the BRIC and the resources and activities of this Center will assist staff in

prioritizing twenty-six (26) project activities that will become the City's comprehensive brownfields plan.

5.2 Provide up to three community outreach information and participation sessions.

Develop workshops for the City's residents, Neighborhood Planning Units, Community Development Corporations, and business development groups for public community involvement activities to solicit input towards development of a brownfields comprehensive brownfield development strategy. In addition to community workshops, the Bureau of Planning will work with the City's Technology Resource Project to design a website for this pilot project which will be accessible through the City's home page. The Technology Project is vital to community information in that this Project is in the process of placing computers at several public locations in each community of the City to allow all Atlanta citizens access to computer literacy and the internet from which the City's website is accessed.

5.3 Using existing information, expand and further develop a database of the City's potential brownfield properties for developers and community development corporations.

The brownfield database currently maintained by the City is limited to the City's Empowerment Zone communities. The City will expand its inventory of potential brownfield sites to other redevelopment project areas in the City and to specific locations as identified through the community information sessions. The goal of this information gathering will be to identify twenty-six (26) brownfield priority sites that fit the criteria of sustainability, livability, economic development and job creation.

5.4 Perform up to three Phase I and one Phase II assessment.

The City will perform up to three Phase I assessments and one phase II assessment at sites identified by the Bureau of Planning. The City will explore additional assessment sites based on activities of the BRIC, sites that are identified in the various community redevelopment plans, and sites that are identified in the community information activities to be provided to communities and to developers.

5.6 To identify one brownfield site in three of the City's redevelopment areas that can be used for open green space purposes.

For quality of life issues, such as sustainability and livability, open green space in communities is critical to environmental health and to the active and passive recreational needs of residents of all age groups. The City will identify up to three brownfield sites in three individual redevelopment areas of the City that could be used for active or passive recreational purposes.

5.7 To identify one “model” site each in three of the City’s redevelopment areas that can be used for new residential or commercial development.

The City will produce up to three site conceptualization plans for one site each in three of the City’s redevelopment areas that can be replicated in other communities throughout the City. This “model” site will serve as a blueprint example to other communities that wish to develop brownfield sites into a more sustainable use.

5.8 Conduct research on the City’s selection criteria for the City’s Urban Enterprise Zone Program and research on liability issues related to brownfield development.

The City’s Urban Enterprise Zone Program provides a tax incentive to new development in the City in certain neighborhoods based on income and geographical factors. Research will be conducted with the State Office of Community Affairs to determine if additional incentives can be provided for development at brownfield sites. The City’s Law Department and the Atlanta Development Authority will research brownfield liability issues and provide recommendations to the BRIC.

5.9 Identify leveraging resources for EPA funds.

Other fund resources will be identified that will leverage brownfield initiatives that are a result of this grant. Other funds to be investigated include Empowerment Zone funds, HUD-CDBG funds, State of Georgia EPD funds, City impact fee funds, the Enterprise Zone tax abatement program, city tax increment financing programs, and the 108 loan program.

6. ORGANIZATION

The Brownfield Assessment Pilot Project will be administered by the City of Atlanta and project management will be the responsibility of the Bureau of Planning (BOP). The BOP will be responsible for establishing a Brownfield Resource Information Center (BRIC). The BRIC will be the resource library for all City information developed about brownfields and will be the location for the community and developers to visit for general information and specific site information. Staffing and equipment needs for this Center will be housed at the Bureau’s current location in City Hall. The BOP will contract with the Atlanta Development Authority and Clark Atlanta University to perform specific elements of the community outreach work as mentioned in section 1.1 of this document. The BOP will be responsible for hiring appropriate environmental firms for conducting any and all environmental assessments performed as part of this project. The BOP will work with the EPA regional office on liability issues and with the City’s Law Department on matters pertaining to proposed changes to the selection criteria and incentives related to the City’s Urban Enterprise Zone Program.

7. PROJECT DESCRIPTION-TASKS

7.1 Task 1-Create a Brownfields Resource Information Center for expansion of the City's brownfields effort.

- A. Purchase equipment and software for the Center.
- B. Assign staff at part-time to manage GIS functions of the Center.
- C. Assemble previous GIS brownfields data into compatible new software and install on the City's network.
- D. Attend E.P.A. training workshops on GIS training.
- E. Prepare a staff work plan to conduct site inventory work.
- F. Develop site maps for review by developers
- G. Develop site conceptualization plans.
- H. Prioritize 26 sites that constitute the City's first comprehensive plan for brownfields.
- I. Prepare a City of Atlanta Brownfields brochure for distribution to the general community and to developers.
- J. Prepare monthly summary work progress report.

7.2 Task 2-Provide up to three community outreach participation and information workshops.

- A. Contract with the Clark Atlanta University Center for Environmental Justice to provide two city-wide community outreach and participation workshops for the City's residents, Neighborhood Planning Units and the City's Community Development Corporations.
- B. Contract with the Atlanta Development Authority to provide one city-wide community outreach and participation workshop for the City's development community.
- C. Establish project relationship with the City's Technology Resource Project to develop project web site for transmitting information to public community locations where computers have been located.
- D. Place project information on the City's web site on a monthly basis.

7.3 Task 3-Expand and further develop a database of the City's brownfields properties for interested parties.

- A. Create GIS-based data and maps from previous brownfield project work completed. Show boundary areas for data collected.
- B. Develop a brownfields database for properties located in up to three of the City's redevelopment areas.
- C. Expand the City's database to include up eight sites not in City redevelopment areas and that have been recommended by the community and developers in community participation workshops.
- D. Create new GIS based maps for new sites that have been identified.

7.4 Task 4-Perform Phase I and Phase II assessments.

- A. Prepare base mapping and background data on selected sites.
- B. Conduct preliminary site identification and obtain access agreement.
- C. Distribute RFP for site assessment consultant.
- D. Complete quality assurance plan and regulatory reporting requirements.
- E. Conduct Phase I and Phase II assessments at sites selected in conjunction with community-based organizations.
- F. Publish Phase I and Phase II assessments.

7.5 Task 5-Identify one brownfield site each in three of the City's redevelopment areas for which conceptual plans can be drafted to cleanup the site for use as an open green space area for the community.

- A. From the database created by the BRIC Center, identify potential sites in the three redevelopment communities that can be used for open green space purposes. Present sites to the appropriate neighborhood group(s) and neighborhood planning unit (s) to prioritize sites.
- B. Conduct phase I assessment of site to be developed in the concept plan.
- C. Prepare site cleanup concept plan for one site in each redevelopment area.
- D. Acquire approval of community for site cleanup concept plan.
- E. Work with the community and consultant to draft an implementation plan for each conceptualization site plan.

7.6 Task 6-Identify one brownfield "model" site each in three of the City's redevelopment areas that can be used for residential or commercial development.

- A. From the City's BRIC database, identify one site each in three of the City's Redevelopment areas for which a site concept cleanup plan can be produced for a "model" site for residential or commercial development.
- B. Form a development task force in each of the three redevelopment areas comprised of businesses, community members and staff of the local Community Development Corporation to decide on site prioritization.
- C. Prepare a base map and background data on site(s)
- D. Conduct phase I assessment of site to be developed in concept plan.
- E. Conduct preliminary site identification and obtain access agreements.
- F. Select consultant for drafting conceptualization plan.
- G. Publish concept plan for community distribution.
- H. Obtain agreement on plan.
- I. Prepare implementation plan for "model" site.

7.7 Task 7-As a non-funded EPA activity, the City will conduct research on the City's selection criteria for the City's Urban Enterprise Zone Program and research on liability issues related to brownfield development.

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- A. Create legislative work plan in conjunction with the City's Law Department and Legislative Coordinator with regards to changing state policies that govern the City's Urban Enterprise Zone Program.
- B. Meet with the State Office of Community Affairs to discuss viability of changes in state law.
- C. Publish and distribute results of research and work to interested parties.
- D. Work with local brownfield developers, the City's Law and Finance Department regarding liability issues related to brownfields development issues.
- E. Obtain technical assistance from E.P.A. regional office.

7.8 Task 8-Identify leveraging resources for EPA funds

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- A. Identify the various funding sources of the City to identify those funds that can be used to match EPA funded activities.
- B. Investigate use of Empowerment Zone funds to leverage EPA funds.
- C. Identify the use of City HUD-CDBG funds to leverage EPA funds.
- D. Identify allowable use of State EPD funds to leverage EPA funds.
- E. Identify city policy for use of impact fees to leverage EPA funds.
- F. Identify use of tax increment financing to leverage EPA funds.

7.9 Task 9-Develop criteria for brownfield site selection process to be used by the community and by developers.

- A. Categories of criteria would include but not be limited to the following;
 - Lot size.
 - Lot data.
 - Environmental status of lot.
 - Location and land use compatibility.
 - Market value of lot.
 - Is lot in special tax district.
 - Is lot in the Empowerment Zone or a City redevelopment area.
 - Status of infrastructure features in the area.

8. MEASURES OF SUCCESS

8.1 Create a Brownfield Resource Information Center.

- Assign staff to operate center.
- Purchase necessary equipment.
- Complete E.P.A. GIS training.

- Complete BRIC work plan.
- Complete monthly Center reports.

8.2 Provide up to three community outreach participation and information workshops.

- Consummate contracts for providing community workshops.
- Number of Neighborhood Planning Units and Community Development Corporations and other interested partners that attend workshops.
- Number of community persons and business persons that attend workshops.
- Establish working relationship with the City's Technology Resource Project.
- Establish web site for the project or get the project included as part of the City's web home page.
- Number of community community based organizations that become involved in the project.

8.3 Expand and further develop the database of the City's brownfield properties.

- Update previous GIS database with new software and establish boundary areas.
- Collected brownfields data for three of the City's redevelopment areas.
- Collected brownfields data for sites recommended from community information sessions.
- Collected data for neighborhoods in the City where development is expected to occur.
- Prepared GIS maps for all new sites identified since July 1, 2000.

8.4 Perform Phase I and Phase II assessments.

- Number of sites identified for assessment.
- Number of property sites access agreements obtained for targeted properties.
- Number of RFPs' completed for assessment work to be done.
- Number of assessments completed.
- Number of assessment reports distributed to the community

8.5 Identify one brownfield site each in three of the City's redevelopment areas for open green space purposes in the community.

- Number of potential sites identified by community stakeholders.
- Identification of consultants to prepare conceptualization plans.
- Approval of site conceptualization plan by the communities.
- Completion of a project implementation plan by the community.

8.6 Identify one brownfield "model" site each in three of the City's redevelopment areas that can be used for new residential or commercial development.

- Number of potential sites identified by community stakeholders.
- Identification of consultants to prepare conceptualization plans.
- Approval of site conceptualization plan by the communities.

-Completion of a project implementation plan by the community.

8.8 Identify leveraging resources for EPA funds.

- Identification of different funding sources.
- Identification of City general funds to leverage EPA funds..
- Completed database of potential funding sources.
- Funding resource document submitted to stakeholders.

9. DELIVERABLES

1. Quarterly reports to EPA.
2. Annual Financial Status Report.
3. Measures of success written monthly updates.
4. Copy of consultant services contracts.
5. List of community stakeholders
6. Copy of GIS work plan.
7. Information on brownfield website development.
8. Copy of assessment reports.
9. Copies of conceptualization plans completed.
10. QA/QC project plans..
11. Copy of report regarding resource leveraging.
12. Submit QAPP for EPA approval prior to field work activity.
13. Quarterly BMS key measures.